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JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE



# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3214

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**“Mr. Medford was so impressed by their handiwork he took a taxpayer-funded sabbatical to assist with a massive lobbying effort aimed at persuading states to pass special laws favoring the Segway.”**

*Wall Street Journal*, March 1, 2002

Dear Colleague:

This week, the House is expected to consider H.R. 3925, the “Digital Tech Corps” bill. This legislation allows private employers to send information technology experts to work in federal agencies and allows federal agencies to send information technology experts to work for private employers.

Under H.R. 3925, federal employees would be able to work for private employers for up to two years while continuing to draw their federal salaries. On March 1, 2002, the Wall Street Journal included a story on how the Consumer Product Safety Commission recently “detailed” a federal employee, Ron Medford, to Segway LLC. It is quite a cautionary tale.

During his ten-month assignment, Mr. Medford draws a federal salary but will be lobbying for the private company as it seeks special state laws allowing the company’s motorized scooter, the Segway, to travel on sidewalks. According to the Wall Street Journal, “Mr. Medford is helping the company gather data for its campaign for special state laws permitting Segways on sidewalks.”

This taxpayer funded boondoggle would be funny if the House were not about to consider H.R. 3925 which will dramatically expand the number of federal employees who can be “detailed” to work for private companies at taxpayer expense.

H.R. 3925 does not have any requirements that the assignment accomplish any training objective or that the federal worker do any work that would benefit the federal government. Instead, H.R. 3925 creates a blank check to send federal workers, at taxpayer expense, to serve the private sector. The only precondition is that there be a request from the private sector.

During floor consideration, Rep. Henry Waxman, Ranking Minority Member of the Government Reform Committee, will offer an amendment to address this flaw. The amendment establishes a comprehensive training program for information technology workers, run by the Office of Personnel Management. The bill’s drafter argues that the exchange program for IT workers is a form of training. If that is the case, then the exchange program should be run by those with expertise in training who can properly place such a program in the context of the overall training needs of the federal government’s IT workforce.

Vote “yes” on the Waxman amendment to H.R.3925.

Sincerely,

*Carolyn B. Maloney*

**CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

**Member of Congress**